

Chief Hopper is an asshole. by heryellowcup

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Summary:

Chief Hopper is an asshole. But he'll take that if it means he gets to dance with Joyce.

Aka my take on the scene of them in the parking lot at the end of 2x09 and what happened after that. One shot.

Chief Hopper is an asshole.

Joyce was leaning against her car in the dark parking lot, looking down at the ground. She couldn't stop thinking about everything that had happened. Even in her sleep, it never left her mind. And yet it was comforting knowing that Will was in there, having fun with his friends, enjoying his first school ball. It made her feel a lot better, knowing that he was happy.

She didn't have to turn around to know it was Hopper when she heard heavy footsteps approaching slowly and yet his simple "hey" startled her and made her jump a little.

"Hey." She looked up at him, mirroring his smile. Hers looked just as sad as his.

"Thought I might find you out here," Jim said. It was the same spot they used to hang out at when they were still in High School. They used to come here during most of their breaks. Listening to music in the car, talking, smoking, teenage stuff. Nothing had ever happened between them but in situations like this, when Joyce felt alone, she had only ever wanted him around.

"Will wanted me to give him some space," she chuckled without being able to hide the sadness in her voice. Not that she had to hide it, not in front of him. And it was true, Will had really wanted some space, but she also just preferred being alone instead of in a room with hundreds of people that knew her as the lady whose son went missing. No, she did not want to be there.

Hopper just grinned and pulled out a pack of cigarettes. He knew Joyce wouldn't want to talk just yet, but he could still try to be there for her.

"What do you say?" he smugly glanced at the cigarettes before looking back at Joyce. "I'm pretty sure Mr. Cooper retired in the seventies, so...we can do this without having to worry about getting caught now," he chuckled and sat down on the hood of the car, right next to her, as he lit the cigarette.

Joyce was looking at him as she remembered the old days and she had to admit that she really did miss it. She missed him. "Gimme that," she laughed softly as she took the cigarette from Jim, coughing as she took her first hit. Yeah, she still wasn't used to that anymore. Hopper was amused as he took the cigarette from her again. She had never been used to that, not even when they had been doing it regularly.

He looked at her, studying her face. This was the perfect moment to talk. They were alone. It was calm. "Hey, you holding up?" he asked, looking down.

"No," Joyce admitted and bit her lip. She felt relieved. Everyone had been asking her questions like that for the past month. Jonathan, Will, the other parents. Not one time had she answered truthfully, but Jim would understand.

"That feeling never goes away," he sighed and handed her the cigarette again. "But it's true what they say, you know, every day it does get a little easier."

Joyce looked up at him, disbelief written all over her face. How could she believe him when everything had been consistently getting worse and worse? Whenever she had found a little bit of happiness, someone or something took it away.

But he understood. He had been there. And so he wrapped his arm around her, pulling her closer. He had always wanted to protect her. And now he could, even if it was just for a few minutes, he could make her feel safe.

They stood there like that for a while, keeping each other company, keeping each other warm in the freezing cold of the night. He was looking up at the stars while she had buried her face in the crook of his neck. He started to grin softly when he heard the music getting louder. What had been a quiet background noise from the ball now felt like it was there with them.

"Wanna dance?," he asked smugly. Joyce shook her head and laughed softly against his warm skin. "Stop being silly."

“I’m not being silly. Look, all these kids in there are having fun with their beautiful dates. Don’t I deserve to have some fun with mine as well?” he grinned and Joyce was really thankful that it was dark. He would have just poked fun at her if he had seen her blush.

“Did you just call me your date, Chief Hopper?” she playfully raised her eyebrows as she pulled away, taking his hand. It almost felt like they were back in High School and no time had passed. Like none of the bad stuff had ever happened.

“I think I just called you beautiful.” He took her other hand as well and gently pulled her away from the car, under one of the street lights. “Now, show me some of your moves or I might have to go in there and find myself another hot lady. I think Mrs. Wheeler is th-“

Joyce cut him off by slapping his arm. “You, Jim Hopper, are an asshole. Do you know that?”

Jim just laughed as they started dancing slowly. If being an asshole meant getting to dance with Joyce Byers, he’d gladly take that.

Author's Note:

I just finished season 2 and while there were many beautiful moments between Joyce and Hopper all throughout the season, the one at the end of 2x09 in the parking lot just made me really happy and inspired me to write this cute little one shot. Please leave a nice comment if you like it :)